

List of German expressions in English

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([//en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_German_expressions_in_English&action=edit)

title=List_of_German_expressions_in_English&action=edit) with reliably sourced entries.

This is a list of German expressions used in English; some are relatively common (e.g. *hamburger*), but most are comparatively rare. In many cases the loanword has assumed a meaning substantially different from its German forebear.

English and German both are West Germanic languages, though their relationship has been obscured by the lexical influence of Old Norse and Norman French (as a consequence of the Norman conquest of England in 1066) on English as well as the High German consonant shift. In recent years, however, many English words have been borrowed directly from German. Typically, English spellings of German loanwords suppress any umlauts (the superscript, double-dot diacritic in *Ä*, *Ö*, *Ü*, *ä*, *ö* and *ü*) of the original word or replace the umlaut letters with *Ae*, *Oe*, *Ue*, *ae*, *oe*, *ue*, respectively (as is done commonly in German speaking countries when the umlaut is not available; the origin of the umlaut was a superscript E).

German words have been incorporated into English usage for many reasons:

- German cultural artefacts, especially foods, have spread to English-speaking nations and often are identified either by their original German names or by German-sounding English names
- Developments and discoveries in German-speaking nations in science, scholarship, and classical music have led to German words for new concepts, which have been adopted into English: for example the words *doppelgänger* and *angst* in psychology.
- Discussion of German history and culture requires some German words.
- Some German words are used in English narrative to identify that the subject expressed is in German, e.g. *Frau*, *Reich*.

As languages, English and German descend from the common ancestor language West Germanic and further back to Proto-Germanic; because of this, some English words are

essentially identical to their German lexical counterparts, either in spelling (*Hand*, *Sand*, *Finger*) or pronunciation (*fish* = *Fisch*, *mouse* = *Maus*), or both (*Arm*, *Ring*); these are excluded from this list.

German common nouns adopted into English are in general not initially capitalised, and the ß is generally changed to ss.

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German terms commonly used in English

Most of these words will be recognized by many English speakers; they are commonly used in English contexts. Some, such as *wurst* and *pumpernickel*, retain German connotations, while others, such as *lager* and *hamburger*, retain none. Not every word is recognizable outside its relevant context. A number of these expressions are used in American English, under the influence of German immigration, but not in British English.

Food and drink

- Berliner Weisse, sour beer infused with fruit syrup
- Biergarten, open-air drinking establishment
- Braunschweiger, a liverwurst cold-cut.
- Bratwurst (sometimes abbrev. *brat*), type of sausage
- Bundt cake, a ring cake (from *Bundkuchen*)
- Delicatessen, speciality food retailer, fine foods (German spelling *Delikatessen*)
- Frankfurter, type of sausage
- Gummi bear, also found with the Anglicized spelling *gummy bear*, German spelling: *Gummibär*
- Hamburger, sandwich with a meat patty and garnishments
- Hasenpfeffer, type of rabbit (or hare) stew

- Hefeweizen, unfiltered wheat beer (containing yeast)
- Kipfel, also *kipferl*, a horn-shaped type of pastry
- Kirschwasser, spirit drink made from cherries
- Knackwurst, cooked sausage
- Kohlrabi, type of cabbage
- Lager, beer made with bottom-fermenting yeast and stored for some time before serving
- Leberwurst, pork liver sausage
- Maß, a unit of volume used for measuring beer
- Muesli, breakfast cereal (Swiss German spelling: *Müesli*, standard German: *Müsli*)
- Pilsener (or Pils, Pilsner), pale lager beer
- Pretzel (Standard German spelling: *Brezel*), flour and yeast based pastry
- Pumpernickel, type of sourdough rye bread, strongly flavoured, dense, and dark in colour
- Quark, a type of fresh cheese
- Rollmops, rolled, pickled herring fillet
- Sauerkraut (sometimes shortened to Kraut), fermented cabbage
- Schnaps, distilled beverage
- Spritzer, chilled drink from white wine and soda water (from *spritzen* = to spray)
- Stein, large drinking mug, usually for beer (from 'Steingut = *earthenware*, referring to the material)
- Streusel
- Strudel (e. g. Apfelstrudel, milk-cream strudel), a filled pastry
- Wiener, hot dog (from *Wiener Würstchen* = Viennese sausage)
- Wiener Schnitzel, crumbed veal cutlet
- Wurst, sausage, cold cuts
- Zwieback, a "twice baked" bread; rusk, variants: German hard biscuits; Mennonite double yeast roll

Sports and recreation

- Abseil (German spelling: *sich abseilen*, a reflexive verb, to rope (seil) oneself (sich) down (ab)); the term *abseiling* is used in the UK and commonwealth countries, "roping (down)" in various English settings, and "rappelling" in the US.
- Blitz, taken from Blitzkrieg (lightning war). It is a team defensive play in American or Canadian football in which the defense sends more players than the offense can block.
- Foosball, probably from the German word for table football, *Tischfußball*,^[1]

although foosball itself is referred to as *Kicker* in German.

- Handstand
- Karabiner, snaplink, a metal loop with a sprung or screwed gate, used in climbing and mountaineering; modern short form/derivation of the older word 'Karabinerhaken'; translates to 'riflehook'. The German word can also mean Carbine.
- Kutte (literally *frock* or *cowl*), a type of vest made out of denim or leather and traditionally worn by bikers, metalheads and punks; in German the word also refers to the clothes of monks.^[2]
- Kletterschuh, climbing shoe (mountaineering)
- Mannschaft, German word for a sports team.
- Rucksack (more commonly called a backpack in U.S. English)
- Schuss, literally: shot (ski) down a slope at high speed
- Turner, a gymnast
- Turnverein, a gymnastics club or society
- Volksmarsch / Volkssport, non-competitive fitness walking
- Volkswanderung

Other aspects of everyday life

- -bahn as a suffix, e.g. Infobahn, after *Autobahn*
- Blücher, a half-boot named after Prussian Field Marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher (1742–1819); also a hand in the British card game Napoleon.
- Dachshund, literally *badger dog*; a dog breed (usually referred to as *Dackel* in German usage)
- Doberman Pinscher, a dog breed
- Doppelgänger, literally *double-goer*, also spelled in English as *doppelganger*; a double or look-alike. However, in English the connotation is that of a ghostly apparition of a duplicate living person.
- Dreck, literally *dirt* or *smut*, but now meaning trashy, awful (through Yiddish, OED s.v.)
- Dummkopf, literally *stupid head*; a stupid, ignorant person, similar to *numbskull* in English
- erlaubt, allowed, granted - opposite of *verboten*.
- Ersatz, replacement; usually implying an artificial and inferior substitute or imitation
- Fest, festival
- Flak, *Flugabwehrkanone*, literally: *air-defence cannon*, for anti-aircraft artillery or their shells, also used in flak jacket; or in the figurative sense: "drawing flak" =

being heavily criticized

- Gemütlichkeit, coziness
- Gesundheit, literally *health*; an exclamation used in place of "bless you!" after someone has sneezed
- Hausfrau, pejorative: frumpy, petty-bourgeois, traditional, pre-emancipation type housewife whose interests centre on the home, or who is even exclusively interested in domestic matters (colloquial, American English only), sometimes humorously used to replace "wife", but with the same mildly derisive connotation
- Kaffeeklatsch, literally *coffee gossip*; afternoon meeting where people (usually referring to women) chitchat while drinking coffee or tea
- kaput (German spelling: *kaputt*), out-of-order, broken
- Kindergarten, literally *children's garden*; day-care centre, playschool, preschool
- Kitsch, cheap, sentimental, gaudy items of popular culture
- Kraut, literally *cabbage*; derogatory term for a German
- Lebensraum, literally *living space*; conquered territory, now synonymous with the Nazi Party
- Meister, *master*, also as a suffix: –meister
- Nazi, short for *Nationalsozialist* (National Socialist)
- Neanderthal (modern German spelling: *Neandertal*), for German *Neandertaler*, meaning "of, from, or pertaining to the *Neandertal* ("Neander Valley")", the site near Düsseldorf where early *Homo neanderthalensis* fossils were found
- Noodle, from German *Nudel*, a type of food; a string of pasta.
- Oktoberfest, Bavarian folk festival held annually in Munich during late September and early October
- Poltergeist, literally *noisy ghost*; an alleged paranormal phenomenon where objects appear to move of their own accord
- Poodle, from German *Pudel*, breed of dog
- Rottweiler, breed of dog
- Schadenfreude, *joy from pain* (literally *harm joy*); delight at the misfortune of others
- Scheiße, an expression and euphemism meaning "shit", usually as an interjection when something goes amiss
- Schnauzer, breed of dog
- Spitz, a breed of dog
- Süffig, if a beverage is especially light and sweet or palatable.
- uber, über, *over*; used to indicate that something or someone is of better or superior magnitude, e.g. *Übermensch*
- Ur– (German prefix), original or prototypical; e.g. Ursprache, Urtext
- verboten, prohibited, forbidden. In both English and German,^[*citation needed*] this

word has authoritarian connotations.

- Volkswagen, literally *people's car*; brand of automobile
- Wanderlust, the yearning to travel
- Wiener, used pejoratively, signifying a spineless, weak person. In German, the term *Würstchen* (the diminutive form of *Wurst*) or *Wiener Würstchen* (Vienna sausage) is used in its place.
- Wunderkind, literally *wonder child*; a child prodigy
- Zeitgeist, spirit of the time
- Zeppelin, type of rigid airship named after its inventor

German terms common in English academic context

German terms sometimes appear in English academic disciplines, e.g. history, psychology, philosophy, music, and the physical sciences; laypeople in a given field may or may not be familiar with a given German term.

Academia

- Ansatz, basic approach
- Doktorvater, doctoral advisor
- Festschrift, book prepared by colleagues to honor a scholar, often on an important birthday such as the sixtieth.
- Leitfaden, guideline
- Methodenstreit, disagreement on methodology
- Privatdozent
- Professoriat

Architecture

- Bauhaus
- Biedermeier
- Jugendstil
- Pfostenschlitzmauer, in archaeology, a method of construction typical of prehistoric Celtic hillforts of the Iron Age
- Plattenbau

Arts

- Gesamtkunstwerk, "the whole of a work of art", also "total work of art" or "complete artwork"
- Gestalt (lit. "shape, figure") a word used the same way as "entity" or "thing" in common language. "The Whole is greater than the sum of the parts"

Music

- Alphorn
- Augenmusik
- Crumhorn, from German *Krummhorn*
- Fach, method of classifying singers, primarily opera singers, by the range, weight, and color of their voices
- Flatterzunge Playing technique for wind-instruments (flutter tongue)
- Flugelhorn (German spelling: *Flügelhorn*), a type of brass musical instrument
- Glockenspiel, a percussion instrument
- Heldentenor, "heroic tenor"
- Hammerklavier, "hammer-keyboard", an archaic term for piano or the name of a specific kind of piano; most commonly used in English to refer to Beethoven's Hammerklavier Sonata
- Hosenrolle
- Kapellmeister, "music director"
- Katzenjammer
- Konzertmeister
- Leitmotif (German spelling: *Leitmotiv*) a musical phrase that associates with a specific person, thing, or idea
- Lied (pronounced "leet"), "song"; specifically in English, "art song"
- Lieder ohne Worte, "songs without words"
- Liederkranz, (originally male) singing club
- Liedermacher, Singer-songwriter
- Meistersinger, Master-singer
- Mensurstrich
- Minnesang, medieval love poetry
- Ohrwurm
- Rauschpfeife
- Schlager, "a hit" (German "schlagen", to hit or beat)
- Schottische, literally "Scottish", a folk dance
- Schuhplattler, a regional dance from Upper Bavaria and Austria
- Singspiel, German musical drama with spoken dialogue
- Sitzprobe, rehearsal of a musical stage work where singers are sitting and without

costumes

- Sprechgesang, form of musical delivery between speech and singing
- Strohbass
- Sturm und Drang, "storm and stress", a brief aesthetic movement in German literature, just before Weimar Classicism
- Urtext, "original text (of the composer)"
- Volksmusik, traditional German music
- Walzer (Waltz)
- Zukunftsmusik

Meanings of German band names

- 2raumwohnung = 2 room apartment (correct spelling: Zweiraumwohnung)
- Abriss West = demolition of the West, a German Punkrock band
- Alter Der Ruine = "Age of the Ruin"
- BlutEngel = "Blood Angel"
- Böhse Onkelz = this is the correct but idiosyncratic spelling of the name of the German band (the correct plural would be "Onkel" without the z or an s, and "böse" for the correct German word for 'evil') "evil uncles," a term used in German as a euphemism for child molesters. The peculiar spelling of the band is intended to "harden" the appearance of the name (*h* in this context amplifies the *ö*; *z* is pronounced *ts* in German, and sounds sharper than *s*). The umlaut over the *o* in *Böhse* is not a heavy metal umlaut.
- Deichkind = dike (or levee) child
- Deutsch-Amerikanische Freundschaft (or *D.A.F.*) = German-American Friendship
- Die Ärzte = the (medical) doctors, a German Punkrock band.
- Die Fantastischen Vier = the fantastic four
- Die Roten Punkte = The Red Dots
- Die Sterne = the stars (celestial body)
- Die Toten Hosen = literally *the dead trousers*. A slang expression for a boring place to be (phrase: "Hier ist total tote Hose.") (commonly used in the northern parts of Germany), it can also refer to impotence.
- Dschinghis Khan = The German spelling of Genghis Khan
- Einstürzende Neubauten = "collapsing new buildings" (as in: buildings that are collapsing)
- Eisbrecher = Ice breaker
- Eisregen = "Ice rain", i. e., freezing rain
- Erste Allgemeine Verunsicherung = "First Public/General Uncertainty/Un-Insurance (better: the first undermining of the public sense of security)", often

abbreviated "EAV". Band name was inspired by the real existing insurance company "Erste Allgemeine Versicherungs-AG" (First General Insurance Inc.)

- Feindflug = "combat mission" (general term for any flight with enemy contact, as opposed to civilian, recon or training flights)
- Fehlfarben = An elder trademark for cheap cigars, but also the term for cigars with spotty/off-colour outer leaves *de:Fehlfarbe*, stamps and furs in the wrong colour, as well the colours in a card play, which are not *trump*
- Fettes Brot = literally *fat bread*, but "fett" is also a slang expression for cool (like English *phat*, which may have inspired it)
- Fluchtweg = literally "way of escape"; emergency exit
- Fräulein Wunder = "Miss Miracle", an allusion to the German expression *de:Fräuleinwunder*, a phenomenon in 1950s Germany referring to modern, attractive and self-assured young women
- Freundeskreis = circle of friends
- Geier Sturzflug = "Vulture Nosedive" (this dive might end in a crash or in hunting prey); vulture is an allusion or symbol for insolvency or bankruptcy, but also refers to the bird in the literal sense. Geier ('Vulture') is als derogatively used for the eagle in the German coat-of-arms.
- Juli = the month july
- Kettcar = the trademark name of a line of toy cars propelled by pedals and a chain. The name is a play on the name of the firm that produces the cars, *Kettler*, as well as the word for "chain", *Kette*.
- Klee = not only the painter Paul Klee, but also German for clover.
- KMFDM = "Kein Mehrheit Für Die Mitleid" [*sic*] (literally "no majority for the pity," which is a grammatically incorrect rearrangement of "Kein Mitleid für die Mehrheit" or "no pity for the masses." A grammatically correct rearrangement would be "Keine Mehrheit für das Mitleid")
- Kraftwerk = power plant
- Kreidler = an elder moped trademark
- Massive Töne = massive sounds
- Nachtmahr = old word for "nightmare" or a legendary creature
- Neu! = new!
- Ostzonensuppenwürfelmachenkrebs = "Eastern Zone Bouillon Cubes Cause Cancer" (where 'Ostzone'='Eastern Zone' refers to the Soviet occupation zone).
- Panzer AG = "Tank PLC"
- Panik = "panic", a German metal band
- Rammstein = "ramming stone" (literal) or "battering ram" (figurative), an intentional misspelling of *Ramstein* and the USAF Ramstein Air Base, the location of the Ramstein airshow disaster. Some translate it as "[stone] hammerhead"

- Rosenstolz = "pride of roses". This can also be understood as "proud like roses" alluding to symbolism of the rose signifying pride
- Rotersand = literally "red sand", named after a famous lighthouse in the North Sea
- Schleimkeim = slime germ, German punk band
- Silbermond = literally *silver moon*, German popband
- Tokio Hotel = literally "Tokyo Hotel", German rock band
- Unheilig = literally "unholy", a band (formerly) representing the "Neue Deutsche Härte"
- Virginia Jetzt! = Virginia now!
- Wir sind Helden = "We are heroes"
- Die Zimmermänner = The former *Ede & Die Zimmermänner*, referring to the television personality *Eduard Zimmermann*, the initiator and former talking head of the TV police search (crimewatch) programme *Aktenzeichen XY ... ungelöst* in the German ZDF channel. A *Zimmermann* is also a carpenter by profession.

Genres

- *Krautrock*: German-like English name for a variety of German rock
- *Neue Deutsche Härte (NDH)*: "New German Hardness"; a genre of German rock that mixes traditional hard rock with dance-like keyboard parts. Recently it has begun to appear in English.
- *Neue Deutsche Welle (NDW)*: "New German Wave". A genre of German music originally derived from punk rock and New Wave music.
- *Romantische Oper*: genre of early nineteenth-century German opera
- *Schranz*: a type of Techno

Selected works in classical music

- Johann Sebastian Bach's *Das wohltemperierte Klavier (The Well-Tempered Clavier)*; *Jesus bleibet meine Freude (Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring)*
- Brahms's *Schicksalslied (Song of Destiny)*
- Kreisler's *Liebesleid (Pain of Love)*, *Liebesfreud (Joy of Love)*
- Liszt's *Liebesträume (Dreams of Love)*
- Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik (A Little Serenade)*; *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)*
- Gustav Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder (Songs on Dead Children)*
- Schubert's *Winterreise (Winter Journey)*
- Schumann's *Dichterliebe (The Poet's Love)*
- Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier (Cavalier of the Rose)*; *Also sprach*

Zarathustra (Thus Spoke Zarathustra); "Vier letzte Lieder" (*Four last songs*)

- Johann Strauss II's *Die Fledermaus* (*The Bat*); *An der schönen blauen Donau* (*On The Beautiful Blue Danube*)
- Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*); *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the Gods*); both from his opera cycle "Der Ring des Nibelungen" (*The Ring of the Nibelung*)

Carols

- *Stille Nacht*: "Silent Night"
- *O Tannenbaum*: "O Christmas Tree"

Modern songs

- *99 Luftballons*: "99 Balloons" (English title: "99 Red Balloons") by Nena
- *Schrei nach Liebe*: "Scream for Love" by Die Ärzte

Theatre

- Verfremdungseffekt

Typography

- Fraktur, a style of blackletter typeface

Biology

- Ahnenreihe
- Ahnentafel
- Anlage in genetics; also used in the sense of primordium in embryology and temperament in psychology; literal meaning "disposition" or "rudiment"
- Aufwuchs
- Aurochs
- Bauplan, body plan of animals
- Bereitschaftspotential
- Edelweiss
- Einkorn
- Krummholz, crooked or bent wood due to growth conditions of trees and bushes

- Lagerstätte, repository; sedimentary deposit rich in fossils
- Molosser, a type of dog, literally *Molossian*, from Molossus, the name of an ancient dog breed which the modern molossers descend from
- Schreckstoff, a chemical alarm signal emitted by fish
- Spitzenkörper, structure important in hyphal growth
- Unkenreflex
- Waldsterben
- Zwitterion
- Zeitgeber (chronobiology), external clue that helps to synchronize the internal body clock
- Zugunruhe (ornithology), pre-migration anxiety in birds and other migratory animals

Chess

- Allumwandlung
- Blitz chess, from German *Blitzschach*, literally "lightning chess", also known as Fast chess
- Fingerfehler: slip of the finger
- Kibitz, from German *Kiebitz* (see de:Kiebitz (Spielbeobachter)), a spectator making comments on the game that can be heard by the players
- Luft
- Patzer
- Zeitnot
- Zugzwang
- Zwischenschach
- Zwischenzug

Economics

- Freigeld
- Freiwirtschaft
- K – In economics, the letter K –from the German word "Kapital"– is used to denote Capital^{[3][4][5][6]}
- Lumpenproletariat
- Mittelstand
- Takt
- Wirtschaftswunder

Geography

- Hinterland
- Inselberg
- Mitteleuropa
- Thalweg (written "Talweg" in Germany today)

Geology

- Bergschrund
- Dreikanter
- Firn
- Gneiss (German *Gneis*)
- Graben
- Horst
- Iceberg (German *Eisberg*)
- Karst
- Loess (German: *Löss*)
- Randkluff

Minerals including:

- Feldspar (German *Feldspat*)
- Hornblende
- Meerschaum
- Quartz (German *Quarz*)

History

(Some terms are listed in multiple categories if they are important to each.)

The Third Reich

Main articles: Glossary of the Weimar Republic and Glossary of Nazi Germany

Other historical periods

- Alltagsgeschichte, literally 'everyday history', a type of microhistory
- Aufklärung, in German: *Aufklärung*, "enlightenment", short for *Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, "age of enlightenment"
- Biedermeier, era in early 19th century Germany
- Diktat
- Gründerzeit, the period in German history of great artistic and economic developments
- Junker
- Kaiser, "emperor" (derived from the title "*Caesar*")
- Kleinstaaterei, the territorial fragmentation of Germany in the early modern period
- Kulturgeschichte
- Kulturkampf, literally the 'struggle for culture'; Bismarck's campaign for secularism which mostly went against Catholics in the newly formed German state, ostensibly a result of Bismarck's suspicion of Catholic loyalty
- Kulturkugel, literally "culture bullet" or "cultural bullet", a neologism coined by archaeologist J. P. Mallory for his model of cultural diffusion
- Landflucht
- Nordpolitik
- Ostflucht
- Ostpolitik
- Ostalgie (nostalgia for the former Eastern Bloc, specifically for the DDR)
- Quellenforschung, "research of sources", the study of the sources of, or influences upon, a literary work
- Realpolitik (political science: "real politics"); usually implies the way politics really works, i.e. via the influence of power and money, rather than a principled approach that the public might expect to be aligned with a party's or nation's values, or rather than a political party's given interpretation.
- Reichstag (Imperial Diet; see Reichstag building, Imperial Diet, Reichstag, and the Reichstag of the Weimar Republic)
- Sammlungspolitik
- Urmonotheismus
- Urreligion
- Völkerschlacht — the Battle of Nations
- Völkerwanderung — the migration (and invasions) of the Germanic peoples in the 4th century
- Weltpolitik — the politics of global domination; contemporarily, "the current climate in global politics".

Military terms

Main article: Glossary of German military terms

- Blitzkrieg, Lightning war. Phrase invented by a Spanish journalist to describe mobile combined arms methods used by Nazis in 1939–1940.
- Fingerspitzengefühl (literally "*finger-tip feeling*", in German used to mean "empathy", "sensitivity" or "tact"): The ability of certain military commanders to understand and master a situation in detail thanks to intuition and a capability that allows having all relevant tactical information available in the mind, presumably in the form of a mental map.
- Flak (***Flugabwehrkanone***), anti-aircraft gun (for derived meanings see under Other aspects of everyday life)
- Fliegerhorst, another word for a military airport
- Karabiner a carbine. For the climbing hardware, see carabiner above
- Kriegsspiel, in English also written *Kriegspiel*, war game (different meanings)
- Luftwaffe, air force (WW II and later, with East Germany and the earlier German Empire using the term *Luftstreitkräfte* instead for their air services)
- Panzer refers to tanks and other armoured vehicles, or formations of such vehicles
- Panzerfaust, "*tank fist*": anti-tank weapon, a small one-man launcher and projectile.
- Strafe, punishment
- U-Boot (abbreviated form of *Unterseeboot* — submarine, but commonly called *U-Boot* in Germany as well)
- Vernichtungsgedanke (thought of annihilation)

Linguistics

- Ablaut
- Abstandsprache
- Aktionsart
- Ausbausprache
- Dachsprache
- Dreimorengesetz, "three-mora law", the rule for placing stress in Latin
- einzelsprachlich (belonging to a single language; in historical linguistics, referring to single dialects or branches within a language family, or a relatively recent period in language development as opposed to the proto-language stage of a family)
- Gleichsetzung, "equation" (of cognates, in etymology)
- Grammatischer Wechsel, "grammatical alternation", a pattern of consonant alternations found in Germanic strong verbs and also in Germanic nouns

- Grenzsígnal, "boundary signal"
- Junggrammatiker, literally "Young Grammarians", a formative German school of linguists in the late 19th century
- Loanword (ironically not a loanword but rather a calque from German *Lehnwort*)
- Primärberührung, "primary contact", the development of certain consonant clusters (stop consonant + /t/) in Proto-Germanic
- Rückumlaut, "reverse umlaut", a regular pattern of vowel alternation (of independent origin from usual ablaut patterns) in a small number of Germanic weak verbs
- Sitz im Leben (Biblical linguistics mainly; the study of Pragmatics has a similar approach)
- Sprachbund, "language union", a group of languages that have become similar because of geographical proximity
- Sprachgefühl, the intuitive sense of what is appropriate in a language
- Sprachraum
- sprachwirklich (said of words and structures: actually attested as opposed to e. g. merely postulated on theoretical grounds, or as opposed to artificial coinages and inventions by ancient grammarians that were never used in reality)
- Sprechbund, "speech bond", a term from sociolinguistics
- Suffixaufnahme
- Umlaut
- Urheimat "original homeland", the area originally inhabited by speakers of a (reconstructed) language
- Ursprache, "proto-language"
- Wanderwort "migratory term/word", a word which spreads from its original language into several others.

Literature

- Bildungsroman
- Knittelvers
- Künstlerroman
- Leitmotiv, a recurring theme
- Leitwortstil
- Nihilartikel, a fake entry in a reference work
- Sturm und Drang, an 18th century literary movement; "storm and stress" in English, although the literal translation is closer to "storm and urge".
- Urtext, "original text"
- Vorlage, original or mastercopy of a text on which derivatives are based

- Wahlverwandtschaft (pronounced with a [v]) (from Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*)
- Q, abbreviation for *Quelle* ("source"), a postulated lost document in Biblical criticism

Mathematics and formal logic

- Ansatz (lit. "set down," roughly equivalent to "approach" or "where to begin", a starting assumption) - one of the most used German loan words in the English-speaking world of science.
- "Eigen-" in composita such as eigenfunction, eigenvector, eigenvalue, eigenform; in English "self-" or "own-". They are related concepts in the fields of linear algebra and functional analysis.
- Entscheidungsproblem
- Grossencharakter (German spelling: Größencharakter)
- Hauptmodul (the generator of a modular curve of genus 0)
- Hilbert's Nullstellensatz (without apostrophe in German)
- Ideal (originally "ideale Zahlen", defined by Ernst Kummer)
- Krull's Hauptidealsatz (without apostrophe in German)
- Möbius band (Ger.: Möbiusband)
- Positivstellensatz
- quadratfrei
- Stützgerade
- Vierergruppe (also known as Klein four-group)
- "Neben-" in composita such as Nebentype
- \mathbb{Z} from (ganze) Zahlen ((whole) numbers), the integers

Medicine

- Anwesenheit
- Diener, autopsy assistant
- Entgleisen
- Gedankenlautwerden
- Gegenhalten
- Kernicterus (German spelling: *Kernikterus*)
- Kleeblattschädel
- Mitgehen
- Mitmachen
- Mittelschmerz ("middle pain", used to refer to ovulation pain)

- Pflropfschizophrenie
- Rinderpest
- Schnauzkrampf
- Sensitiver Beziehungswahn
- Spinnbarkeit
- Verstimmung
- Vorbeigehen
- Vorbeireden
- Wahneinfall
- Witzelsucht
- Wurgstimme

Philosophy

- An sich, *in itself*
- Dasein
- Ding an sich, *thing in itself* from Kant
- Geist, mind, spirit or ghost
- Gott ist tot!, a popular phrase from Nietzsche; more commonly rendered "God is dead!" in English.
- Übermensch, also from Nietzsche; the ideal of a Superhuman or Overman.
- Weltanschauung, calqued into English as *world view*; a comprehensive view or personal philosophy of human life and the universe
- Welträtsel, "world riddle", a term associated with Nietzsche and biologist Ernst Haeckel concerning the nature of the universe and the meaning of life
- Wertfreiheit, Max Weber's postulate: statements of science should be kept separate from value judgments (value neutrality)
- Wille zur Macht, "the will to power", central concept of Nietzsche's philosophy

Physical sciences

- Ansatz, an assumption for a function that is not based on an underlying theory
- Antiblockiersystem
- Aufbau principle (physical chemistry) (German spelling: *Aufbauprinzip*)
- Bremsstrahlung
- Entgegen and its opposite zusammen (organic chemistry)
- Foehn wind, also *foehn*, (German spelling *Föhn*), a warm wind which sometimes appears on the northern side of the Alps in south Germany and Austria.
- Gedanken experiment (German spelling: *Gedankenexperiment*; more commonly

referred to as a "thought experiment" in English.)

- Gegenschein, a faint brightening of the night sky in the region of the antisolar point
- Gemisch (chemistry: a randomized mixture of components)
- Gerade and its opposite ungerade (quantum mechanics)
- Graupel, a form of precipitation
- Heiligenschein
- Hohlraum, a radiation cavity used in thermonuclear weapons design
- Kirchweger-Kondensationseinrichtung
- Kugelblitz, also a term for ball lightning
- Mischmetall, alloy
- Rocks and minerals like Quartz (German spelling: *Quarz*), Gneiss and Feldspar (originally *Gneis* and *Feldspat* respectively), Meerschaum
- Reststrahlen (residual rays)
- Schiefspiegler, special type of telescope
- Schlieren, inhomogeneities in transparent material
- Sollbruchstelle, predetermined breaking point
- Spiegeleisen
- Trommel
- Umpolung (organic chemistry)
- Vierbein, and variations such as **vielbein**
- Zitterbewegung
- Zwitterion

Politics

- Lumpenproletariat
- Machtpolitik, power politics
- Putsch, overthrow of those in power by a small group, coup d'etat. (Although commonly understood and used in contemporary High German, too, the word *putsch* originates from Swiss German and is etymologically related to English "push".)
- Realpolitik, "politics of reality": foreign politics based on practical concerns rather than ideology or ethics.
- Rechtsstaat, concept of a state based on law and human rights
- Berufsverbot
- Überfremdung
- Vergangenheitsbewältigung

Psychology

- Aha-Erlebnis, literally *aha experience*, a sudden insight or epiphany, compare *eureka*
- Angst, feeling of fear, but more deeply and without concrete object
- Eigengrau, literally "intrinsic grey", or also Eigenlicht, "intrinsic light", the colour seen by the eye in perfect darkness
- Einstellung effect, from *Einstellung*, which means "attitude" here
- Erlebnis, from 'Erleben' experience, meaning a lived through conscious experience
- Ganzfeld effect, from German *Ganzfeld* for "complete field", a phenomenon of visual perception
- Gestalt psychology, (German spelling: *Gestaltpsychologie*), holistic psychology
- Merkwelt, English: "way of viewing the world", "peculiar individual consciousness"
- Schadenfreude, gloating, a malicious satisfaction obtained from the misfortunes of others
- Sorge, a state of worry, but (like *Angst*) in a less concrete, more general sense, worry about the world, one's future, etc.
- Umwelt, environment, literally: "surrounding world"; in semiotics, "self-centred world"
- Zeitgeber (lit. time-giver), something that resets the circadian clock found in the Suprachiasmatic nucleus
- Wunderkind, child prodigy

Sociology

- Gemeinschaft, community
- Gesellschaft, society
- Herrschaft, reign
- Männerbund, secret society
- Verstehen, understanding
- Zeitgeist, spirit of the times or age

Theology

- Gattung, genre ^{[7][8][9][10]}
- Heilsgeschichte (salvation history, God's positive saving actions throughout history)
- Kunstprosa, artistic prose ^{[11][12][13][14]}
- Sitz im Leben (setting in life, context)

German terms mostly used for literary effect

There are a few terms which are recognised by many English speakers but are usually only used to deliberately evoke a German context:

- **Autobahn** — particularly common in British English and American English referring specifically to German motorways.
- **Achtung** — Literally, "attention" in English.
- **Frau** and **Fräulein** — Woman and young woman or girl, respectively in English. Indicating marital state, with *Frau* — Mrs. and *Fräulein* — Miss; in Germany, however, the diminutive *Fräulein* lapsed from common usage in the late 1960s. Regardless of marital status, a woman is now commonly referred to as *Frau*, because from 1972 the term *Fräulein* has been officially phased out for being politically incorrect and should only be used if expressly authorized by the woman concerned.
- **Führer** (umlaut is usually dropped in English) — always used in English to denote Hitler or to connote a Fascistic leader — never used, as is possible in German, simply and unironically to denote a (non-Fascist) leader or guide, (i.e. *Bergführer*: mountain guide, *Stadtführer*: city guide (book), *Führerschein*: driving licence, *Geschäftsführer*: managing director, *Flugzeugführer*: Pilot in command, etc.)
- **Gott mit uns** (means "God be with us" in German), the motto of the Prussian king, it was used as a morale slogan amongst soldiers in both World Wars. It was bastardized as "Got mittens" by American and British soldiers, and is usually used nowadays, because of the German defeat in both wars, derisively to mean that wars are not won on religious grounds.
- **Hände hoch** — hands up
- **Herr** In modern German either the equivalent of Mr. (Mister), to address an adult man, or "master" over something or someone (e.g. *Sein eigener Herr sein*: to be his own master). Derived from the adjective *hehr*, meaning "honourable" or "senior", it was historically a nobleman's title, equivalent to "Lord". (*Herr der Fliegen* is the German title of *Lord of the Flies*.) In a religious context it refers to God.
- **Ich bin ein Berliner**, famous quotation by John F. Kennedy Translated it means "I am a Berliner".
- **Lederhosen** (Singular *Lederhose* in German denotes one pair of leather short pants or trousers. The original Bavarian word is *Lederhosn*, which is both singular and plural.)
- **Leitmotif** (German spelling: *Leitmotiv*) Any sort of recurring theme, whether in music, literature, or the life of a fictional character or a real person.

- Meister — used as a suffix to mean expert (*Maurermeister*), or master; in Germany it means also champion in sports (*Weltmeister*, *Europameister*, *Landesmeister*)
- Nein — no
- Raus — meaning *Out!* — shortened (colloquial) (depending on where the speaker is, if on the inside "get out!" = *hinaus*, if on the outside "come out!" = *heraus*). It is the imperative form of the German verb *herauskommen* (coming out (of a room/house/etc.) as in the imperative "*komm' raus*"!).^[15]
- Reich — from the Middle High German "rich", as a noun it means "empire" or "realm", cf the English word "bishopric". In titles as part of a compound noun, for example "Deutsche Reichsbahn", it is equivalent to the English word "national" (German National Railway), or "Reichspost" (National Postal Service). To some English speakers, *Reich* strongly connotes Nazism and is sometimes used to suggest Fascism or authoritarianism, e.g., "Herr Reichsminister" used as a title for a disliked politician.
- Ja — yes
- Jawohl a German term that connotes an emphatic yes — "Yes, Indeed!" in English. It is often equated to "yes sir" in Anglo-American military films, since it is also a term typically used as an acknowledgement for military commands in the German military.
- Schnell! — *Quick!* or *Quickly!*
- Kommandant — commander (in the sense of *person in command* or Commanding officer, regardless of military rank), used often in the military in general (*Standortkommandant*: Base commander), on battleships and U-Boats (*Schiffskommandant* or U-Boot-Kommandant), sometimes used on civilian ships and aircraft.
- Schweinhund (German spelling: Schweinehund) — literally: Schwein = pig, Hund = dog, vulgarism like in *der verdammte Schweinehund* (*the damned pig-dog*). But also used to describe the lack of motivation (for example to quit a bad habit) *Den inneren Schweinehund bekämpfen*. = to battle the inner *pig-dog*.
- Weltschmerz, world-weariness/world-pain, angst; despair with the world.
- Wunderbar — wonderful

German terms rarely used in English

If a term in this list is **common** in a particular academic discipline, then please move it to one of the lists above.

- Ampelmännchen

- Besserwisser. Someone who always "knows better."
- Eierlegende Wollmilchsau, literally "egg-laying wool-milk-sow", a jack of all trades
- Fahrvergnügen meaning "driving pleasure"; originally, the word was introduced in a Volkswagen advertising campaign in the U.S., one tag line was: "Are we having Fahrvergnügen yet?". Caused widespread puzzlement when it was used in television commercials with no explanation.
- Gastarbeiter — a German "guest worker" or foreign-born worker
- Götterdämmerung, literally "Twilight of the Gods", can refer to a disastrous conclusion of events such as the defeat of Nazi Germany that had an ideology in part based on Norse mythology; an allusion to the title of the Wagner opera.
- Kobold — a small mischievous fairy creature, traditionally translated as "Goblin", "Hobgoblin", and "Imp"; the roleplaying game Dungeons & Dragons has included reptilian Kobolds (as well as creatures called "Goblins", "Imps" and "Hobgoblins" in completely separate forms) as part of the bestiary for a number of editions, including the current edition, D&D 4th Edition. *Kobold* is also the origin of the name of the metal cobalt.
- Ordnung muss sein — "order must be", or, less literally, "tidiness is a necessity", a common phrase illustrating the great importance that German culture traditionally places on this aspect of life
- Schmutz (smut, dirt, filth). This term is, however, particularly popular in New York, reflecting the influence of the Yiddish language.
- ... über alles (originally "Deutschland über alles" (this sentence was meant originally to propagate a united Germany instead of small separated German Territories only); now used by extension in other cases, as in the Dead Kennedys song *California Über Alles*). This part (or rather, the whole first stanza) of the Deutschlandlied (Song of the Germans) is not part of the national anthem today, as it is thought to have been used to propagate the attitude of racial and national superiority in Nazi Germany, as in the phrase "Germany over all".
- Vorsprung durch Technik ('competitive edge through technology'): used in an advertising campaign by Audi, to suggest technical excellence
- Zweihänder, two-handed sword

Quotations

Some famous English quotations are translations from German. On rare occasions an author will quote the original German as a sign of erudition.

- *Muss es sein? Es muss sein!*: "Must it be? It must be!" — Beethoven

- *Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln*: "War is politics by other means" (literally: "War is a mere continuation of politics by other means") — Clausewitz
- *Ein Gespenst geht um in Europa — das Gespenst des Kommunismus*: "A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism" — *The Communist Manifesto*
- *Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!*: "Workers of the world, unite!" — *The Communist Manifesto*
- *Gott würfelt nicht*: "God does not play dice" — Einstein
- *Raffiniert ist der Herrgott, aber boshaft ist er nicht*: "Subtle is the Lord, but malicious He is not" — Einstein
- *Wir müssen wissen, wir werden wissen*: "We must know, we will know" — David Hilbert
- *Was kann ich wissen? Was soll ich tun? Was darf ich hoffen? Was ist der Mensch?*: "What can I know? What shall I do? What may I hope? What is Man?" — Kant
- *Die ganzen Zahlen hat der liebe Gott gemacht, alles andere ist Menschenwerk*: "God made the integers, all the rest is the work of man" — Leopold Kronecker
- *Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir. Amen!*: "Here I stand, I cannot do differently. God help me. Amen!" — attributed to Martin Luther
- *Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen*: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" — Wittgenstein
- *Einmal ist keinmal*: "What happens once might as well never have happened." literally "once is never" — theme of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* by Milan Kundera
- *Es lebe die Freiheit*: "Long live freedom" — Hans Scholl

See also

- List of pseudo-German words adapted to English
- List of English words of Dutch origin
- List of English words of Yiddish origin
- Denglish
- Yinglish
- English

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- User-generated collection of Germanisms (<http://spreadgermanisms.com>) , including images of spottings.
- Mathematical Words: Origins and Sources (<http://www.economics.soton.ac.uk/staff/aldrich/Mathematical%20Words.htm>) (John Aldrich, University of Southampton) See Section on Contribution of German.
- High German loanwords in English (<http://germanic.zxq.net/HGEngloans.html>)

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